

COBBETT'S WEEKLY POLITICAL REGISTER.

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SUMMARY OF POLITICS.

PROCEEDINGS IN PARLIAMENT.—On Tuesday, the 7th instant, the parliament was opened by a Speech delivered to the two Houses by Lords Commissioners, in the name of the Prince Regent. The public, who had witnessed so many of these openings, always conducted in the same way, seemed to expect nothing at all interesting upon the present occasion. Greatly, however, were they deceived; and greatly do the parliament seem to have been surprised, by a step taken by Sir Francis Burdett, who himself offered an Address for the adoption of the House, which Address, if it failed in the usual requisite of pleasing the venal writers, seems to have been thought by the mover to possess another requisite not less important: namely, that of being an echo to the sentiments of the people.—It is my intention to make a faithful record of the proceedings of this remarkable sitting; and therefore it will be necessary to begin with the insertion of the Speech of the Lords Commissioners, which was as follows.

“ My Lords and Gentlemen,—We are commanded by his Royal Highness the Prince Regent to express to you the deep sorrow which he feels in announcing to you the continuance of His Majesty's lamented indisposition, and the unhappy disappointment of those hopes of his Majesty's early recovery which had been cherished by the dutiful affection of his family and the loyal attachment of his people.—The Prince Regent has directed copies of the last Reports of Her Majesty the Queen's Council to be laid before you, and he is satisfied that you will adopt such measures as the present melancholy exigency may appear to require.—In securing a suitable and ample provision for the support of His Majesty's Royal Dignity, and for the attendance upon His Majesty's sacred Person during His illness, the Prince Regent rests assured, that you will also bear in mind the indispensable duty of continuing to preserve for his Majesty the facility of resuming the personal

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exercise of His Royal Authority in the happy event of His recovery, so earnestly desired by the wishes and the prayers of His Family and His subjects.—The Prince Regent directs us to signify to you the satisfaction with which his Royal Highness has observed, that the measures which have been pursued for the defence and security of the kingdom of Portugal have proved completely effectual; and that on the several occasions in which the British or Portuguese troops had been engaged with the enemy, the reputation already acquired by them has been fully maintained.—The successful and brilliant enterprise, which terminated in the surprise, in Spanish Estramadura, of a French corps by a detachment of the Allied Army under Lieutenant-General Hill, is highly creditable to that distinguished Officer, and to the troops under his command, and has contributed materially to obstruct the designs of the enemy in that part of the Peninsula.—The Prince Regent is assured, that while you reflect with pride and satisfaction on the conduct of His Majesty's troops, and of the Allies, in these various and important services, you will render justice to the consummate judgment and skill displayed by General Lord Viscount Wellington, in the direction of the campaign. In Spain, the spirit of the people remains unsubdued; and the system of warfare so peculiarly adapted to the actual condition of the Spanish nation has been recently extended and improved, under the advantages which result from the operations of the allied armies on the frontier, and from the countenance and assistance of His Majesty's Navy on the coast. Although the great exertions of the enemy have in some quarters been attended with success, His Royal Highness is persuaded, that you will admire the perseverance and gallantry manifested by the Spanish armies. Even in those Provinces principally occupied by the French forces, new energy has arisen among the people; and the increase of difficulty and danger has produced more connected efforts of general resistance.—The Prince Regent, in the name and on the behalf of

His Majesty, commands us to express his confident hope that you will enable him to continue to afford the most effectual aid and assistance in the support of the contest which the brave nations of the Peninsula still maintain with such unabated zeal and resolution.—His Royal Highness commands us to express his congratulations on the success of the British arms in the island of Java.—The Prince Regent trusts that you will concur with His Royal Highness in approving the wisdom and ability with which this enterprise, as well as the capture of the Islands of Bourbon and Mauritius, has been conducted under the immediate direction of the Governor-General of India; and that you will applaud the decision, gallantry, and spirit, conspicuously displayed in the late operations of the brave army under the command of that distinguished Officer Lieutenant-General Sir Samuel Achmuty, so powerfully and ably supported by His Majesty's naval forces.—By the completion of this system of operations, great additional security will have been given to the British commerce and possessions in the East Indies, and the colonial power of France will have been entirely extinguished.—His royal highness thinks it expedient to recommend to your attention the propriety of providing such measures for the future government of the British possessions in India, as shall appear from experience, and upon mature deliberation, to be calculated to secure their internal prosperity, and to derive from those flourishing dominions the utmost degree of advantage to the commerce and revenue of the United Kingdom.—We are commanded by the Prince Regent to acquaint you, that while his Royal Highness regrets that various important subjects of difference with the Government of the United States of America still remain unadjusted, the difficulties which the affair of the Chesapeake frigate had occasioned have been finally removed; and we are directed to assure you that in the further progress of the discussions with the United States the Prince Regent will continue to employ such means of conciliation as may be consistent with the honour and dignity of his Majesty's Crown, and with the due maintenance of the maritime and commercial rights and interests of the British Empire.

“*Gentlemen of the House of Commons.*—His Royal Highness has directed the estimates for the service of the current year to be

laid before you. He trusts that you will furnish him with such supplies as may be necessary to enable him to continue the contest in which his Majesty is engaged, with that spirit and exertion which will afford the best prospect of its successful termination.—His Royal Highness commands us to recommend that you should resume the consideration of the state of the finances of Ireland, which you had commenced in the last Session of Parliament. He has the satisfaction to inform you, that the improved receipt of the revenue of Ireland, in the last, as compared with the preceding year, confirms the belief, that the depression which that revenue had experienced is to be attributed to accidental and temporary causes.

“*My Lords and Gentlemen.*—The Prince Regent is satisfied that you entertain a just sense of the arduous duties which his Royal Highness has been called upon to fulfil, in consequence of his Majesty's continued indisposition.—Under this severe calamity, His Royal Highness derives the greatest consolation, from his reliance on your experienced wisdom, loyalty, and public spirit, to which, in every difficulty, He will resort, with a firm confidence, that, through your assistance and support, He shall be enabled, under the blessings of Divine Providence, successfully to discharge the important functions of the high trust reposed in him: and in the name, and on the behalf of his beloved Father and revered Sovereign to maintain, unimpaired, the prosperity and honour of the nation.”

The Speaker and Members having returned to the House of Commons, the usual ceremony was about to take place, *Lord Jocelyn* was about to move the Address and *Mr. Vyse* to second it. But, previous to this part of the business, the Speaker had to read the Speech over to the House. He had just finished the reading, when *Sir Francis Burdett* rose, and began to speak. There was now a loud cry, from all parts of the Honourable House, for *Lord Jocelyn*; so loud that *Sir Francis* could not be heard; but he kept his legs; and, at length, the Speaker said, that the Honourable Baronet was certainly in possession of the House, and, if he insisted upon his right, must be allowed to proceed, which he did accordingly.—But, before I proceed to give any account of his speech, I think it my duty to notice what has been said by the venal prints upon this part of the proceedings of the

day. They seem to regard Sir Francis as having done something *unfair*, if not almost unlawful; and, they describe him as being actuated by vicious motives. The *Courier* has these words. "The Prince Regent's Speech did not produce any very protracted debate in either House: though a circumstance almost *unprecedented*, occurred in the House of Commons. It has been *usual*, after the Speech has been read by the Speaker, upon his return from the House of Lords, for *no Member to rise* before the Member WHO IS to move the Address. Sir Francis Burdett, however, rose before the Mover, and made a long Speech, and moved a long Address to the Regent upon any other topic than those touched upon in the Speech. The Baronet has one feature which is never the characteristic of a sound understanding; a love of singularity; a desire of advancing and maintaining *strange doctrines*."—The *Morning Post* says, that of the circumstances of disinclination in the regular party men to enter on any contest about the Speech, "Sir Francis Burdett, instigated, no doubt, by those, who, behind the curtain, are known to prompt the democratic puppet, most honourably availed himself to take the Speaker by surprise, and to rise, as it was imagined, to speak to some point of order or privilege, and thus to get possession of the House. He then proceeded to move an Address, but not an Address, which, as *usual*, was an echo to the Speech from the throne, &c. &c." The writer then proceeds to characterize the Address of Sir Francis, of which I shall say more by-and-by. The *Morning Chronicle*, which is never to be confounded with the prints just spoken of, has this passage:—"A most remarkable sensation was created in the House of Commons yesterday, by the unforeseen and unprecedented *tactic* of Sir Francis Burdett, in rising and taking precedence of the full-dressed Lord and Gentleman, who were appointed to move and second the complimentary Address, as a mere echo to the Speech. It was quite a new thing. He rose the instant the Speech was read, and caught the Speaker's eye, who no doubt imagined he was to speak on some point of privilege, which claims precedence of all other topics: but when he announced that he meant to conclude his speech with a motion for an Address to the Prince Regent; the *ruse de guerre*

"became manifest; and it is impossible to describe the *astonishment* that spread over the Ministerial benches; but the Baronet was in possession of the House, and he made good his way."—Now, who would not imagine, from what is contained in these paragraphs, that Sir Francis was guilty of something foul and dishonourable in rising in his place and moving an Address to the Prince Regent? Who would not imagine, that he had no right, at least according to the laws of honour, to do what he did? Really, this is putting this Assembly in a light worse than any that I have ever seen it placed in before. If he had no right to move what Address he chose, no other member could have that right; and, then, what a despicable farce would all this talk about *deliberating* and *debating* become! The two venal prints above-mentioned speak of the moving and seconding of the Address as matters arranged before-hand; the *Courier* speaks of the custom for "no member to rise before the member who is to move the Address;" and his worthy fellow-labourer, the *Post*, complains that Sir Francis "took the Speaker by surprise;" while the *Morning Chronicle* talks of the full-dressed Lord and Gentleman, who "were appointed to move and second the Address, as a mere echo to the Speech." Why, if I were to speak thus of the Honourable House; if I were to represent the thing in this light; if I were to exhibit this proceeding as these writers have, as a sort of solemn farce, previously got up by the minister; if I were to stick up the prepared mover and seconder of the Address like a couple of mummies, dressed out for the occasion, and with words put into their mouths; what, if I were to do this, would be said of me, or done to me? And, yet, these writers affect to respect the House of Commons, they affect to be enraged with any one who speaks of it slightly, while they thus exhibit it in the most contemptible light, and do, in fact, publish on it the most cutting satire that can possibly be imagined. For, if what they say were true, it would follow, that, in fact, there was no *freedom of debate*, no such thing as *deliberation*, with regard to the Address at least; that all was prepared beforehand; all got up for the day; all the actors appointed and even dressed for the occasion; and, in short, that the whole thing was a mere exhibition to amuse and deceive the people. How

is it possible, I ask, for the Parliament to be portrayed in a light at once more odious and more contemptible?—"An *echo* to the Speech!" And, how dare these men say, that an *echo* to the Speech is prepared before-hand? If this were the case, then, indeed, this would be a delightfully dignified Assembly! It is well known, that the *Speech* is prepared by the Ministers; and, if they were to prepare the *answer*; and if it were regarded as unfair in any member to rise and propose an answer according to his own way of thinking, what a despicable show would this proceeding be; how much lower would this mummary be than any thing ever beheld at Bartholomew Fair!—And yet, this is the light, in which the Honourable House is exhibited by those, who affect to have the most profound respect for it; this is the light, in which that House is exhibited by those, who abuse Sir Francis Burdett because, as they alledge, he speaks of it with too little respect!—I shall now proceed to give an outline, and a mere outline, of the Baronet's speech, which was very long, and which will, probably, appear hereafter in a distinct publication, accompanied with his Address; and, I hope it may so appear; seeing that so much pains have, by the venal prints, been taken to misrepresent it.—He set out with stating, that he thought it his duty to address the Prince Regent in the language of *truth*; to lay before him a *true* state of the country; to carry to his ear the complaints of a loyal and suffering people; and that he had great satisfaction in reflecting, that the Prince was not one of those who loved deceit, who hated every thing but smooth words, but that, on the contrary, he knew from the character and declarations of His Royal Highness, that he would be best pleased with that frank language and plain expression of sentiment, which it became the parliament to use at all times, and especially at the present crisis.—He then complained, that, amidst all the compliments, largely and most justly bestowed upon our army, who merited every praise that could be bestowed upon them, and whose fortitude and valour had been, upon all trying occasions, so conspicuous; he complained, that, amidst all these compliments, the word *freedom* never found a place in the list of those objects for which so much military virtue had been exerted, And, he then

proceeded to remark, that the war against France was, from its outset, a war against freedom and reform; and that, in fact, so had been all our wars from that against America to that now carrying on in Sicily, Spain, and Portugal.—He next adverted to the striking contrast, which our zeal for the Catholics in Spain exhibited when compared with our conduct towards our better allies, the Catholics of Ireland, whose religion we made a bar to their admission to rights equal to those of Protestants, while we had no scruple of supporting even the Inquisition in Spain.—Sir Francis, in speaking of the Speech, having observed, that there were many parts in it which would not have been addressed to the House, if it were, as it was supposed to be, a *real representation* of the people, he was loudly *called to order*, and was informed by the Speaker, that that was not language, in which the House ought to be addressed. Whereupon, as the report of the debate states, "Sir Francis declared, that nothing could give him greater pleasure than to be called to order on such a subject; because he was now from thence to understand that it was to insult the House to say, that they were not the representatives of the people. If this doctrine had been held previous to the year 1809, he (Sir F. Burdett) should not have been so much surprised; but really, after what he had then heard within the walls of that House; after it was not only boldly asserted, and offered to be proved, that seats were publicly bought and sold in open day; when this was not only not denied, but ministers even admitted the fact and justified the traffic, on the ground of its notoriety, and being of every day's practice, he should have expected that such delicacy of expression as that which it seemed to be supposed he ought, on the present occasion, to observe, would not have been insisted on, and that the House would not have been offended, though he did not regard them as to all intents and purposes the pure representatives of the nation at large. This defect in the representative system was one great object to which he (Sir F. Burdett) was anxious to call the attention of the Prince Regent, after he should be free from the shackles with which he was at present loaded, and which, as an encroachment on the just prerogatives of the Throne, he (Sir F. Burdett) was of opinion ought

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“ never to have been imposed. The Hon. Baronet looked forward with confidence to the period when his Royal Highness should be freed from the fetters with which he was at present bound, assured from the principles of his Royal Highness, and from those declarations to which he had pledged himself, that he would redress the complaints of the people in this important point, on which the salvation of the country in a great measure depended. The Worthy Baronet had seen persons who stood up in defence of an Absolute Government; he had seen others who preferred an Aristocracy; and a third party who would rather chuse a Democracy; and he had perused well-written articles in defence of each of these systems. But a man who would recommend an Oligarchy, and that too not of great men, but of rotten borough-mongers, persons not to be found in any other country but our own, was one whom he had never yet met with. That was the root of all the evils under which the country now groaned; and to this grand and fundamental grievance he (Sir F. Burdett) had felt it his duty thus early to call the attention of the House, and of the Prince Regent.” — This, I dare say, is a very imperfect account of what was said by Sir Francis, upon this subject; but, I take it from the paper, where the debates are best given, the *Morning Chronicle*, and it will, at any rate, afford the reader the means of forming an idea of what must have passed as to this point, which, in fact, is *the all in all*. — After speaking of the abandonment of our cause by all our former allies, and showing the wretched state of our affairs as to the continent of Europe, the Baronet turned to the state of our own country; dwelt upon the means employed in collecting the revenue; upon the interference of the government between landlord and tenant; upon the operation of the “land-tax redemption Act;” upon the stamps on wills and the legacy duty; upon the surcharges and other means of raising money, now in vogue through the country. — He next came to the enormous additions made to the military force stationed at home, and to the means that, he said, had been made use of to estrange the soldier from the citizen and the citizen from the soldier; next to the German Troops and the dressing of Englishmen in a German garb. From this he came to the subject of flogging soldiers, and pro-

mised that he would take an early opportunity of bringing that subject under the particular consideration of the House. —

The last point which he touched upon was the *perils of the press*. He concluded by an expression of perfect confidence in the disposition of the Prince Regent, whose repeated pledges, he said, were a sure guarantee, that, the moment he should be relieved from the restrictions imposed upon him, he would avail himself of all the powers that in him lay of redressing the numerous grievances of the people, and particularly that master grievance, the want of a parliamentary reform: — Here Sir Francis brought forward the Address, which, having been first read by himself, was then read by the Right Honourable the Speaker, from the chair, in the following words:

To His Royal Highness the Prince Regent.

We, his Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Commons of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, in Parliament assembled, return your Royal Highness the humble thanks of this House for the most gracious Speech delivered by the Lords Commissioners by your Royal Highness's command.

We assure your Royal Highness, that we shall, without delay, take into our serious consideration, all the matters, to which your Royal Highness has been pleased to direct our attention; and endeavour to adopt such measures as are best calculated to meet the exigencies of the times.

But we should deem it a failure in our duty, were we, on this solemn occasion, to omit expressing to your Royal Highness, with the frankness suggested by a due sense of our functions, the sentiments we entertain on the present situation of our country, and to point out to your Royal Highness the remedy, which, in our opinion, is called for by the evils already experienced and by the dangers which appear to be impending.

We always hear with great satisfaction, though not with surprise, that our countrymen in arms, whether by land or by sea, maintain the character of their ancestors; but, we cannot, at the same time, dismiss

from our minds all consideration of the little effect with which their valour has been exerted ; and, in the *cause*, in which it has been displayed, we lament to see nothing characteristic of that love of freedom, for which this nation has heretofore been so highly renowned in the world. In looking through the history of the last eighteen years of war, we find the valour and resources of our country in no instance employed in the defence or restoration of freedom ; but almost constantly in endeavours to prevent the oppressed from becoming free, or to replunge them into slavery, to re-harden the grasp of despotism, and to sharpen the half-blunted fangs of persecution ; so that, the British flag, formerly the dread of tyranny, appears, through this long and disgraceful period, to have waved only in hostility to the liberties and happiness of mankind.

From a line of conduct so repugnant to justice, to the common sense and common feeling of men, the natural results have ensued. In those distant regions, where ignorance and feebleness have rendered the people an easy prey to successive usurpations, we have uniformly been conquerors, and, in overturning one despotism, have, for the purposes necessary to the maintenance of corruption at home, uniformly erected another in its stead ; while, in all those countries, where men have attained a knowledge of their rights, and have possessed courage to avenge themselves on their oppressors, we have found few and treacherous friends and many and implacable foes. The sovereigns, our allies, subdued not less by that abuse of their power, which we endeavoured to support, than by the arms of their and our enemy, have either been driven from their thrones, or have abandoned our cause and disclaimed our connection, as the only means of retaining even a scanty portion of their former dominions ; so that, after having stirred up, in hostility to freedom, almost every sovereign of the continent of

Europe ; after having expended hundreds of millions in support of that formidable but unprincipled league, we are, at last, reduced to contend alone with the conqueror of that continent, upon a spot, which we have only assisted to desolate and ravage, in defence of sovereigns, who, unable to rely on the affection of their subjects, have sought their personal safety in abdication or in flight.

To the regret at having seen the national resources exhausted in the prosecution of measures so fraught, at once, with wickedness and folly, we have not, however, to add the shame of having seen the people of this kingdom voluntarily lend their aid to those measures. Their sense of justice and love of freedom revolted at so inhuman a crusade, which, at the outset, they condemned, and against which many had the virtue openly to protest, well knowing, that a war against freedom, in other countries, was, in reality, a war against the people of England themselves. To counteract the effect of opinions so obviously just, a system of terror was resorted to ; false alarms were excited ; spies and informers were hired ; plots were invented ; constructive treasons were revived, and new-fangled treasons enacted ; the safeguards of personal liberty were removed ; fortresses, under the name of barracks, were established throughout the land ; and the fame and the person of every man were placed at the absolute disposal of those, who, calling themselves the servants of the king, were, in fact, the agents of that rapacious and haughty oligarchy, who had long fattened on the miseries of the country, and who, in the progress of the principles of liberty, saw the seeds of a destruction of their ill gotten power.

Under the operation of this system we have beheld much that remained of our liberties wholly swept away ; we have seen practised, under the name of collecting a revenue and in the guise of legal proceedings, acts of oppression and insult,

which our forefathers would have perished rather than endure. The dwellings, the books, the most private recesses and concerns of Englishmen, once so sacred, are now exposed to the intrusion and inquisitorial scrutiny of numberless mercenary agents, appointed and removable at the pleasure of the crown. Financial rapacity breaks in between landlord and tenant, and, in violation of every principle of property, makes the Crown co-proprietor in every man's estate, having a prior claim upon his tenant. Under the name of redeeming a land tax it makes a general confiscation of landed property; while, in the form of a stamp duty, it seizes the bequests of the dead in their passage to the living; so that, at last, there is no man in England who can be said to be the owner or proprietor of any thing, the government having, by degrees, assumed a controul and mastership over property of every description. There was a time, in English history, when the extortions of an Empson and a Dudley, though under the sanction of an act of parliament, brought the principals to the block and consigned their subaltern agents to public vengeance in the pillory; but, now have we many Empsons and Dudleys in every county, who, under the name of surchargers, supervisors, &c. inflict amercements and fines at their pleasure, the parties so amerced being denied not only an appeal to a jury, but even the aid of counsel or attorney to speak in their defence before those fiscal tribunals, which, to the terror of the people, are established in every corner of the land.

In exact proportion to the increase of these extortions have we seen the increase of the military force, and the multiplication of means calculated to divest the soldier of all fellow-feeling with the citizen. Cooped up in Barracks and Depots, flogged for the most trifling offences, the former loses, by degrees, all regard for those rights of which he is deprived, all attachment to that constitution out of the pale of

which he is placed, and becomes the passive and unconscious instrument of tyrannical coercion. But, mistrustful of Englishmen's feelings, many thousands of German and other foreign mercenaries have been introduced and placed on our military establishment with privileges not possessed by the troops of our own country; whole districts of England and large portions of the English army have been put under the command of German officers; and, the more effectually to estrange the people from the native soldiers, the latter have, in many instances, been compelled to assume a German garb. The Militia, heretofore regarded as the sole constitutional force of the country, upon the principle, that, as men had most interest, so they would be most stout, in defending their liberties and properties; the militia, having been long perverted from its legitimate purpose, has, at last, by the interchange of the English and Irish Militias, been converted, with respect to the two countries, into the too convenient instrument of reciprocal oppression; and especially with regard to Ireland, where the just remonstrances and complaints of a generous, a gallant, and long-suffering people have uniformly been met with repulsion and disdain. In the institution of the Local Militia we behold all the severities of a military conscription without its impartiality and without a chance of its rewards; and, in the assumed prerogative of calling upon the people to perform military duty under that system of discipline which is now in practice, we see every man in England, when commanded to take up arms in what is termed the defence of his country, liable to experience the degradation and torture of the lash.

That a people, formerly so proud of their liberties, would be silent under such an accumulation of oppression, and that the communication of indignant feeling would not, in the end, produce resistance, was too much for even an insolent and obdurate oligarchy to expect. Therefore,

the Press, never the last to suffer when freedom is assailed, has become, in proportion to the augmentation of these oppressions, more and more an object of jealousy and of vengeance. And, after having beheld the use that has been made of the unconstitutional assumption of power by the Attorney General to file *Ex Officio Informations*, to accuse, to arraign, to amerce, to hold to bail, to ruin, or to pardon, whomsoever he pleases; after having seen that this accuser, an officer of the crown removable at its pleasure, has also the power of demanding a jury, not taken out of an impartial pannel, but selected by another officer of the crown; after having seen a judge so eager to convict as openly to anticipate guilt before hearing the evidence in defence; after having seen the sentences in cases of political libel gradually become more and more severe till they have far surpassed in severity those for the greater part of felonies, including long imprisonment, heavy fines, banishment to distant jails, and confinement in solitary cells, going to the almost certain ruin and the probable death of the persecuted parties; after having seen all this, and taken a view of the number of persons thus suffering at this moment, we cannot, we confess, see much room for repeating the congratulation of our forefathers upon the abolition of the cruel and accursed Court of Star Chamber, which did, without a Jury, that which is now done by means of a Jury chosen by an officer of the Crown; an alteration which only serves to screen a corrupt political Judge from his due share of public odium, and to deprive the victim of that public compassion, which is always called forth in behalf of those who suffer from undisguised tyranny.

To particularise the fatal effects of this course of misrule would, if it were possible, be useless, they being too visible in the multiplied embarrassments and abject state of the country, whether in its affairs at home or abroad. But, to the great cause of all these evils we cannot, without a

shameful neglect of our duty, refrain from beseeching the attention of your Royal Highness, who will, at once, perceive that we allude to the want of a real representation of the people in the Commons' House of Parliament. With a fair representation, the people are never in danger; because, from whatever quarter they feel grievance approaching, here is their court of appeal, here their means of immediate redress. Without such a representation, the people are never safe; they have no court of appeal, no friend in government, no means of redress or of protection. To the want of such a representation, to the want of a House of Commons emanating from the peoples' choice and speaking their sentiments, we owe eighteen years of war against France, lest example should produce a reform of corruption and abuses at home. To the want of such a representation we owe the hundreds of millions of debt, which have debased our currency, sapped the foundations of covenants, annihilated confidence, and added new crimes to our already sanguinary criminal code. To the want of such a representation we owe the unpunished rapacity of prize courts, the insults and injuries innumerable against friendly nations, the ruin of commerce and manufactures, and the countless number of paupers, whose state, when contrasted with the luxury proceeding from the public money lavished on placemen and pensioners, would be beyond human endurance without the ever-awing aspect of military force.

If any thing be yet wanting to work conviction of these truths, we implore your Royal Highness to cast your eyes over the Continent of Europe. Not a Sovereign has there been dethroned, not a state has there been subdued, where the way of the conqueror was not paved by corruption in the government, and by the tyranny which corruption never fails, sooner or later, to call to its support. And, when we see the same causes at work amongst ourselves; when we hear the worst sort of corruption

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not only not denied, but unblushingly avowed and vindicated upon the ground of its being as notorious as the sun at noon day, it were presumption unparalleled to hope, that similar effects will not follow.

To put an end, therefore, to corruptions and abuses, by a constitutional reformation of the Commons' House of Parliament, appears to us to be the only means of reconciling the people to their government, of rekindling their zeal and invigorating their exertions, of insuring the independence of the country and the safety and stability of the throne.

The Address having been read, it was seconded by LORD COCHRANE, in the following words, as given in the report of the debate in the Morning Chronicle. His Lordship's speech contains matter of very great importance; it states facts, of which every one seems before to have been almost wholly ignorant; but which are worthy of particular attention, more especially as his Lordship appears to have been an eye witness of the most material part of what he thought it his duty to lay before the House and the public. —

"Lord Cochrane rose and seconded the Address of the Honourable Baronet. He perfectly concurred with his Honourable Friend in all the sentiments which that Address expressed, and more especially in that part of it which related to the progress of the war in the Peninsula. It was no less evident to him than to his Honourable Friend, that our exertions were misdirected, and that we only sought to perpetuate a despotism in the rulers, and a subjection in the people, which a free nation should abhor. He would allow, indeed, and it must be allowed by all parties, that our troops had behaved with a gallantry which might delight but could not astonish us, and that they were ably conducted by Lord Wellington; but the forces of Great Britain alone were inadequate to contend with those of France; and there was no cordial co-operation between them and the Portuguese. He spoke from facts that had occurred within his own observation, and therefore he spoke decidedly. Nor was it possible they could cordially co-operate in a cause which they were compelled to uphold under the pressure of a military system

that was horrible. He had seen, both in Sicily and Portugal, the men driven like slaves, in chains. He had seen them dying in the highways and fields like dogs, without medical attendance, and without assistance of any sort—he had beheld them without the covering of clothes, and without the shelter of a house. And he would ask, if men thus raised, thus treated, could have the feelings of soldiers or of patriots? or if a war thus carried on can be expected to terminate successfully? But these were not the only evils of which that people had to complain—that people to whom it is our boast that we have given freedom. The jails and the dungeons of the Inquisition were filled with unhappy wretches who pined there in hopeless captivity, unvisited even by the cheering hope of a trial: and so little influence have we in effect in that country, that a British Minister at Lisbon was forced to make his escape to England that he might not share, even by implication, the guilt of such proceedings. He would add also, from his own personal observation, that there is not an individual, either in Sicily or Portugal, who does not thoroughly abhor the British name; and that our army in the former place has been sent out, not to keep the French from invading it, but merely to perpetuate a most detestable and insupportable oppression of the people. If the ministers had any doubt of these facts, he wished a party of them might be exported every year to Portugal and Sicily, that they might see and know them. In referring to the internal state of the country, it was his firm opinion, that if the present system was persevered in, England must inevitably be ruined. Our situation, indeed, was truly alarming; our bank paper depreciated; our taxes increased and increasing; the lower class of people in danger of starving, and the necessary consequences of this, a number of needy and vicious individuals let loose upon society. In adverting to that part of the Prince Regent's speech, which related to the war in the Peninsula (which war he believed it would be impossible for us to carry on without the revival of our former commerce), he could not consider our army in any other light than an army of observation; it was incompetent to the defence of Spain; it might indeed defend Por-

“ tugal, till the French collected sufficient
 “ supplies, and then it must fall back to
 “ Portalegre. Was this a defence of Por-
 “ tugal? It could not be called such. We
 “ can remain there no longer than the
 “ French choose to let us. After going
 “ through several of the particulars of
 “ the Honourable Baronet’s Address, and
 “ echoing its sentiments with regard to
 “ the state of the press, the waste of
 “ public money, the taxes, and their mode
 “ of being levied, by which no man’s
 “ house was any longer sacred, the Ho-
 “ nourable member adverted to our natural
 “ fitness for conducting a maritime war,
 “ and referred the Ministers to an oration
 “ of Demosthenes, for the manner in which
 “ it should be carried on. It was his opi-
 “ nion that there should have been fre-
 “ quent descents made upon various parts
 “ of the French coast, by which means
 “ not one of those armies which are now
 “ subjugating Spain could have stirred out
 “ of France; for in each individual part
 “ where a descent might be expected, a
 “ resisting force equal to the opposing one
 “ must have been kept up.—The Noble
 “ Lord concluded his speech by second-
 “ ing the Address of his Hon. Friend, which
 “ had his unqualified approbation.”—
 After this *Lord Jocelyn* rose. His Lordship
 did not stop to answer any part of the
 Speech of the Baronet or that of Lord
 Cochrane, but contented himself simply
 with saying, that he wholly disapproved of
 all that they had said, and of all that was
 contained in the Address, to which he pro-
 ceeded to propose an *amendment*, which, as
 the news-papers tell us, was an echo to
 the Speech of the Lords Commissioners.
 He was seconded by *Mr. Vyse*, who also
 expressed his disapprobation of the Ad-
 dress.—Where there is no contradiction,
 there cannot be said to be any debate.
 Two gentlemen, however, did start objec-
 tions to certain parts of the Address: *Mr.*
Whitbread and *Sir Vicary Gibbs*. The for-
 mer is reported to have “ declared, that he
 “ *fully coincided* in a large part of what had
 “ fallen from the Hon. Baronet; but as the
 “ House seemed now to be proceeding to
 “ a division, he thought it necessary to
 “ say, that he could not vote in support
 “ either of the Address moved by the Hon.
 “ Baronet, or of the Amendment moved
 “ by the Noble Lord. He conceived that
 “ the Hon. Baronet had traced many of
 “ those national misfortunes, which were
 “ now so deeply deplored, to their true
 “ and legitimate sources; but he had, at

“ the same time, interspersed these obser-
 “ vations with *personal allusions*, of the
 “ foundation of which he was not assured,
 “ and had made them at a *time*, and in a
 “ *place*, of which he did not altogether see the
 “ propriety.”—Of the personal allusions,
 the Attorney General spoke afterwards, as
 we shall presently see; but, as to the *time*
 and the *place*, I really cannot see how they
 could form any objection to the matter
 contained in the Address. The Address
 professed to be a statement of a part, at
 least, of the *grievances of the people*; and
 what *place* could be so proper for this as
 that where the people’s representatives
 were assembled; what *time* so proper as
 that when the people’s representatives
 were answering a Speech upon the general
 concerns of the nation? If there was, as
 there might possibly be, any thing incor-
 rect in the Address itself (for *Sir Francis*
Burdett is not infallible any more than
 other mortals), that incorrect part might
 have been objected to; and, as *Mr.*
Whitbread approved of a large part of it,
 it seems to me that he might have taken
 the pains to endeavour to improve the Ad-
 dress by such Amendments as to him it
 might have appeared to require. The
 great end of discussion, and, indeed, the
 only end of it, is to arrive at a right decision.
 In *Lord Jocelyn*, who appears to have dis-
 approved of the whole of the Address, it
 was perfectly consistent to move for the
 setting of the whole aside; but, in a gen-
 tleman, who approved of a large part of it,
 it would, it appears to me, have been more
 consistent to endeavour to get rid of what
 he thought bad, and to preserve what he
 thought good.—*Sir Vicary Gibbs’s* objec-
 tion went to the whole also, it appears;
 but, there was one part to which he made
 a specific objection. Indeed, he *denied the*
fact that it contained; and, as I am a great
 advocate for *truth*, whether in an Address
 or a Speech, I shall here insert, from the
 fullest report of this part of the debate that
 I have seen (that in the *Times* newspaper),
 what *Sir Vicary Gibbs* said, and also what
Sir Francis said in reply. The words of
 both are reported as follows.

“ The Attorney General was not present
 “ when the Honourable Baronet made his
 “ speech; but he had heard the Address
 “ read, and in it there were particular
 “ words which impelled him to offer to
 “ the House a few observations. The
 “ whole of that address he certainly re-
 “ probated; but the particular words to
 “ which he alluded, were those which

“ went to stigmatize the character of a
 “ learned Judge, and were, in substance
 “ that “ *that learned judge had anticipated*
 “ “ *a verdict of guilty on the trial of Mr.*
 “ “ *White.*” He would take upon himself
 “ to say, that this statement of the Ho-
 “ nourable Baronet, with respect to Lord
 “ Ellenborough, was wholly unfounded.
 “ It was well known, that no man could
 “ discharge the duties of his high station
 “ with more liberal justice than that
 “ Learned Lord; and as to the trial which
 “ was particularly adduced, he would ven-
 “ ture to say, that no defence could be
 “ heard more patiently than that which
 “ Mr. White thought proper to make.
 “ Mr. White made many objections on
 “ the legality of what was urged against
 “ him: those objections he argued by his
 “ Counsel, but he did not commit his de-
 “ fence to his legal assistant. Both his
 “ Counsel and himself were heard with
 “ singular forbearance: their objections
 “ were heard over and over again; and
 “ he was confident, that during the whole
 “ of the trial not one word fell from the
 “ Noble Lord which could in the slightest
 “ manner justify the assertion, that he was
 “ so eager for a conviction as to anticipate
 “ the verdict. Indeed, he was at a loss
 “ to conceive what part it was of the
 “ language of the Noble Lord on that oc-
 “ casion, which gave rise to the severe
 “ comment of the Hon. Baronet.

“ Sir Francis Burdett, in explanation,
 “ said, that what he founded his assertion
 “ upon, was that part of Lord Ellen-
 “ borough’s language to Mr. White,
 “ where his Lordship advised that Gentle-
 “ man to reserve his evidence *until he*
 “ *should be brought up for judgment.*

“ The Attorney General. It is evident,
 “ from the explanation of the Hon. Baro-
 “ net himself, that Lord Ellenborough
 “ acted even a humane part. (*Hear, hear.*)
 “ It is plain, that Lord Ellenborough only
 “ advised Mr. White to reserve his evi-
 “ dence for *affidavits*, in *mitigation of pu-*
 “ *nishment*; which, though they would
 “ not serve him as evidence on the trial,
 “ might be advantageous to him should he
 “ be brought up for judgment.

“ Sir Francis Burdett replied, that he did
 “ not think the Noble Lord much bene-
 “ fitted by this triumphant explanation of
 “ the Right Hon. Gentleman. One thing
 “ was certain, that the remark of the
 “ Judge was made *before the evidence was*
 “ *heard.*”

As this was the only part of the Ad-

dress that became matter of *debate*, it
 will be right to afford the reader the best
 possible means of forming a right judg-
 ment thereon.—I will obtrude upon
 him no *opinion* of my own; I will not
 even offer any thing in the way of *argu-*
ment; but will simply quote that passage
 of the report of Mr. White’s Trial, to
 which, it seems, Sir Francis Burdett al-
 luded, when he says, in his Address:
 “ after having seen a judge so eager to
 “ convict as to anticipate guilt before
 “ hearing the evidence in defence.” The
 passage of the Trial, here alluded to,
 stands as follows in the report published
 in the Times Newspaper:

“ At the conclusion of the defence, Mr.
 “ White was asked, whether he meant to
 “ call witnesses to speak to what he had
 “ opened.

“ Lord Ellenborough said, that the evi-
 “ dence he had stated would go only in
 “ mitigation, and not to acquittal? but,
 “ his Lordship wished to know, whether
 “ the Defendant would prefer having it
 “ on his Notes, or by affidavits before the
 “ Court hereafter.

“ The Defendant at first chose to wait;
 “ but, the foreman of the jury saying it
 “ would be more satisfactory to his mind
 “ to hear it, the defendant called his wit-
 “ ness.

“ Lord Ellenborough told the juryman
 “ to what extent only it would affect the
 “ case. Every printer was responsible
 “ for what was printed at his press;
 “ otherwise the moment a man gets into
 “ jail he might open his engine for all
 “ sorts of libel with impunity.”

Now, whether this was a correct report
 of what passed is more than I can say;
 but, it is, word for word, what was pub-
 lished in the Times newspaper and also
 in the Courier news-paper. I saw the re-
 port in other news-papers; and, though
 the words might differ a little from the
 above, the substance appeared to me to
 be the same. Whether this was “ an an-
 “ ticipation of guilt before hearing the
 “ evidence in defence,” is what I shall
 not pretend to determine. My object is
 to place all the facts fully and fairly before
 the reader, leaving him to form his own
 judgment as to the correctness, or incor-
 rectness of Sir Francis’s allusion.—But,
 in answer to the charges against Sir
 Francis, circulated through the venal
 prints, I must be permitted to make some
 observations of my own. His speech has
 been called *mischievous*; it has been called,

by the Morning Post, "a *prepared* and "*studied* satire, such as might become a "seditious tavern meeting, upon the "whole of his Majesty's long and venerated reign. Thus," continues the writer, "at the moment when the representatives of the nation were called "upon *sedately* and *solemnly* to express "their grief at the protracted illness of a "beloved Sovereign, did this paragon of "patriotism come forward to *revile* his "memory and *ridicule* the most *salutary* "measures of his reign."—I wonder whether there be any man living, who has the face to say, that he approves of these falsehoods? And, mark the candour of the writer, who while he thus describes the Address of Sir Francis, takes care not to *publish* it; takes care not to afford his readers an opportunity of detecting the falsehoods, which he so unsparingly promulgates.—For my part, I will offer no *opinion* upon the Address, much less will I attempt to urge any *arguments* in its defence. I will let it take its own chance in the world. I have enabled the reader to form his own judgment on it. By its own merits or demerits, let it, I say, stand or fall.—But, I feel myself at full liberty to observe on the manner, in which it has been assailed; and, I put it to the candour of any man, whether he sees, in this Address any thing *reviling the memory of the king*; whether he sees any thing of *ridicule* in it; and whether this mode of *answering* its statements is likely to be successful with any impartial man; nay, whether it be not manifestly injurious to the cause it seems to espouse?—This Address contains a great number of *positions* and *assertions*. These, if untenable, or untrue, admit of refutation and disproof; and the way to *answer* the Address, is, to refute and disprove them, and not to load their author with foul abuse and false accusations.—The use of the press, as far as relates to politics, is, first, to convey true information to the people; and, next, to afford the means of discussing disputed points. In this instance we see the information withheld, and the discussion supplied by abuse; by sheer, foul, personal abuse. This is not the way, in which I am accustomed to proceed. I insert the thing upon which I comment. I enable the reader to judge between me and my opponent. I let him hear both sides. This is a fair way of proceeding; and, it is the only way to produce *conviction*.—I should like to see sir Francis's Ad-

dress answered in this way. I should like to see some one take it, paragraph by paragraph, and give it an answer; and, if any gentleman will do this, putting his name to what he writes, I promise him, that I will give publicity to his answer, provided it do not exceed four times the length of the Address; provided his answer reach me within fifteen days; and provided it do not contain any personal abuse.—Now, if this offer be not accepted, and, if those who disapprove of the Address confine themselves to foul abuse of the Address and its author, accompanied with all sorts of misrepresentations and falsehoods, what, I ask, must be the conclusion in the minds of all impartial men? And, observe, impartial men only are those about whose opinions any one need be solicitous.

I have now endeavoured to put upon record a fair account of the whole of the memorable proceedings of the 7th of January, 1812. I have been, as far as I am able, an impartial historian of the origin and fate of the Address, of which, perhaps, I should have said much less (for it speaks pretty plainly for itself), had I not seen such unwarrantable means made use of to give it a false representation to the public. There is another consideration. This Address will be heard of in foreign countries; it will be heard of in America, on the continent of Europe, and in the Colonies. It is therefore, right that it should go forth in its proper light. The author of it has pledged his reputation upon it; it contains his opinions as to politics; it is his declaration as to the nation's affairs at home and abroad; and, what must the world think of us, if we appear to shut our ears against it, and hear, in answer to it, nothing but the most foul and disgraceful abuse; language not fit to be used by any but the lowest and most reprobate classes of men.—We are told, that the Address has received quite a sufficient answer in the fact of there being only one gentleman, Mr. CUTHBERT, to vote for it, besides the mover and seconder. But, if this be regarded as a sufficient answer; if the monosyllable NO be a sufficient answer, why all this abuse? Why so much expression of anger and resentment? Why not let the thing die a quiet death? Why not let it drop out of sight, and never be more heard of?—The truth is, that Sir Francis Burdett is supposed to speak the sentiments of a very considerable portion

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of the people of this kingdom; this these writers well know, and that is the cause of their anger. But, would it not, then, be better for them to give the Address a fair answer? Perhaps they think it unworthy of it; and, if that be the case, why say any thing at all about it? At any rate, no good can possibly arise to its opponents by loading it and its author with that abuse, which can degrade only those who resort to such means of attack.

Before I conclude I cannot withhold a remark or two upon the conduct of these venal prints towards sir Francis Burdett as a member of parliament. We saw how they all approved of the commitment and long imprisonment of Mr. Gale Jones, whose crime was that of advertising a discussion of the conduct of Mr. Yorke in the House. We have seen them join in approbation of every punishment of this sort; and heard them, upon such occasions, talk, in loud terms, of the dignity of parliament. But, as to sir Francis Burdett, they appear to think him, as one of them thought the soldiers, out of the pale of the constitution. They seem to think, that there is *no law for him*; and, if we may judge from their writings, there is no impediment but their want of courage to their knocking of his brains out in the open street, or even in his seat in the House. Upon this occasion, they call him a "democratic puppet;" a "mischievous Baronet;" the "ass in the fable." They say that the Address, which he proposed to the House, was fit for "a seditious tavern meeting;" and they say, that Mr. Cuthbert disgraced himself in voting for it. Now, we all know, that they would not dare to talk thus of any body else. This is the *liberty of the press*, of which they boast, and which they enjoy in perfect safety; for the object of their attack (who never speaks harshly of any body but those whom he deems the great enemies of his country), though he says nothing of these venal scribes, *thinks*, doubtless, with the honest poet, that

"The villain's censure is extorted praise;" and thus he contents himself, leaving the law of libel and the privileges of parliament for the benefit of those who may deem them necessary safeguards of their reputation.

So much for the Proceedings on the first day of the Session. I have only to add, upon this occasion, an observation or two upon the *state of parties*, if any thing

like party can still be said to exist. What a change has taken place in this respect! The Whigs, as they are still sometimes called, seem to be fast melting away into a state of individuality. There is no leader whom they acknowledge; no man in whom they have confidence; no set of principles to which they so much as profess to be attached. As to the ministers, they have power, and that is all. There is no leader; or, at least, no one seems to know who is the leader. There is no great man, either in point of talent or family, that makes any figure, on either side. And, as to the people, they really seem as indifferent, with respect to all choice between the parties, as they are with respect to the conquests of sugar-islands. The truth is, that the reputation of party has been wholly destroyed. The people are weary of the thing. They have seen, that no change of men does them any good; they see that the difficulties of the country and their own burdens still go on increasing; hope is, at last, dead within them; and, they either turn from politics with disgust, or, if they have any glimmering of hope left, it is one so mixed with fear, that they know not whether to cherish or to repel their expectations. This is an awful state for a country to be in; but, this is the state, in which England is at this day. The taxes, if not augmented nominally, must be in reality, by the means of increased severity in the mode and time and measure of collection. And, is there a reflecting man, who does not believe, that some great change must be produced at last? Is there one such man, who sincerely believes, that we can, without some very great change of system, extricate ourselves from this state? There are men, and, some of them, very well meaning men, who still rail against Jacobins and Levellers. Alas! what have they done? What have they been able to do? They have had no hand in producing this state of things. The railing against them might, at one time, proceed from alarm; but, it is now the effect of a sort of senseless resentment that knows not what to fall upon. If there were any great body of the nobility and gentry, standing forward for a reform of the system which has led to the present calamities, the spirit of the country would be very different from what it is; but, we see no such body. The gentlemen of England seem to have given up the country to the minister of the day. Each seems to care for nobody but himself;

and to think himself pretty well off, if he has weight enough left to secure him the permission to have a sufficiency to live upon. The barriers, erected by the pride and circumstance of family worth and by the circles of hospitality, are all swept away. There is no longer any intermediate link. The natural magistracy, as Hume calls it, is extinguished. All authority now proceeds immediately from the government. There is not a village in England where the Surveyor of Taxes is not a more powerful man than the Lord of the Manor. The principle of obedience is that of fear and not of love. What must be the feeling of an English Gentleman, if there be one with any feeling left, who first mounted his hunter fifty years ago, and who now sees his son a subscriber to a county pack, and, in public places, instead of a plain and bold asserter of his country's rights, an humble and awkward imitator of the special pleaders of the day, anxious only not to be thought the friend of those few, who still are not ashamed to contend for the liberties of England; who still are not ashamed to assert that Englishmen have rights! The lot of such a father is not to be envied even by the hoary beggar that sweeps the crossing in the streets. Both are but one remove from a return to the earth whence they sprang; but the latter, if not quite unconscious of the fallen state of his country, has, at least, the consolation of knowing, that he has never, by act or omission, contributed towards the cause by which it was produced.

WM. COBBETT.

*State Prison, Newgate, Friday,
10th January, 1812.*

AMERICAN STATES.

ORDERS IN COUNCIL.

*Mr. Pinkney to Mr. Smith. — London,
Jan. 17, 1811.*

(Continued from p. 32.)

.....I prepared an answer accordingly and sent it in with the other note, and a note of the 15th, respecting two American schooners lately captured on their way to Bourdeaux, for a breach of the Orders in Council. Copies of all these papers are inclosed.—My answer to Lord Wellesley's letter was written under the pressure of indignation and the influence of more indignation than could be well suppressed. His letter proves what scarcely required

proof, that if the present Government continues, we cannot be friends with England. I need not analyse it to you.—I am still so weak as to find it convenient to make this letter a short one: and will therefore only add, that I have derived great satisfaction from your instructions of the 15th of November, and have determined to return to the United States in the Essex. She will go to L'Orient for Mr. Grayson, and then come to Cowes for me and my family. I calculate on sailing about the last of February. The choice of a Chargé d'affaires embarrasses me exceedingly; but I will do the best I can. The dispatches by the Essex were delivered to me by Lieut. Rodgers on Sunday. I have the honour to be, &c.

Lord Wellesley to Mr. Pinkney. — Foreign Office, Dec. 29, 1810.

Sir,—In acknowledging the receipt of your letter of the 10th instant, I must express my regret that you should have thought it necessary to introduce into that letter any topics which might tend to interrupt the conciliatory spirit in which it is the sincere disposition of his Majesty's government to conduct every negotiation with the government of the United States.—From an anxious desire to avoid all discussions of that tendency. I shall proceed, without any farther observation, to communicate to you the view which his Majesty's government has taken of the principal question which formed the object of my enquiry during our conference of the 5th instant. The letter of the French Minister for Foreign Affairs to the American Minister at Paris, of the 9th of August 1810, did not appear to his Majesty's government to contain such a notification of the repeal of the French Decrees of Berlin and Milan as could justify his Majesty's government in repealing the British Orders in Council. That letter states, "That the Decrees of Berlin and Milan are revoked, and that from the 1st of November, 1810, they will cease to be in force, it being understood that in consequence of this declaration the English shall revoke their Orders in Council, and renounce the new principles of blockade which they have attempted to establish."—The purport of this declaration appeared to be, that the repeal of the Decrees of Berlin and Milan would take effect from the 1st of November, provided that Great Britain, antecedently to that day, and in consequence of

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this declaration, should revoke the Orders in Council, and should renounce those principles of blockade which the French government alleged to be new. A separate condition relating to America seemed also to be contained in this declaration; by which America might understand that the Decrees of Berlin and Milan would be actually repealed on the 1st of November, 1810, provided that America should resent any refusal of the British government to renounce the principles of blockade, and to revoke the Orders in Council.—By your explanation, it appears, that the American Government understands the letter of the French Minister as announcing an absolute repeal on the 1st of November, 1810, of the French Decrees of Berlin and Milan; which repeal, however, is not to continue in force, unless the British government, within a reasonable time after the 1st of November, 1810, shall fulfil the two conditions stated distinctly in the letter of the French Minister. Under this explanation, if nothing more had been required from Great Britain for the purpose of securing the continuance of the repeal of the French decrees than the repeal of our Orders in Council, I should not have hesitated to declare the perfect readiness of this Government to fulfil that condition. On these terms the British Government has always been sincerely disposed to repeal the Orders in Council. It appears, however not only by the letter of the French Minister, but by your explanation, that the repeal of the Orders in Council will not satisfy either the French or the American government. The British government is farther required by the letter of the French Minister, to renounce those principles of blockade which the French Government alleges to be new. A reference to the terms of the Berlin Decree will serve to explain the extent of this requisition. The Berlin Decree states, that Great Britain “extends the right of blockade to commercial unfortified towns, and to ports, harbours, and mouths of rivers, which, according to the principles and practice of all civilized nations, is only applicable to fortified places.” On the part of the American Government, I understand you to require, that Great Britain should revoke her order of blockade of May 1806. Combining your requisition with that of the French Minister, I must conclude that America demands the revocation of that order of blockade as a

practical instance of our renunciation of those principles of blockade which are condemned by the French Government. Those principles of blockade Great Britain has asserted to be ancient and established by the laws of maritime war, acknowledged by all civilized nations, and on which depend the most valuable rights and interests of this nation. If the Berlin and Milan Decrees are to be considered as still in force, unless Great Britain shall renounce these established foundations of her maritime rights and interests, the period of time is not yet arrived, when the repeal of her Orders in Council can be claimed from her, either with reference to the promise of this Government, or to the safety and honour of the nation. I trust that the justice of the American Government will not consider that France, by the repeal of her obnoxious decrees, under such a condition, has placed the question in that state which can warrant America in enforcing the non-intercourse act against Great Britain, and not against France. In reviewing the actual state of this question, America cannot fail to observe the situation in which the commerce of neutral nations has been placed by many recent acts of the French Government; nor can America reasonably expect that the system of violence and injustice now pursued by France with unremitted activity (while it serves to illustrate the true spirit of her intentions), should not require some precautions of defence on the part of Great Britain.—Having thus stated my view of the several considerations arising from the letter of the French Minister, and from that with which you have honoured me, it remains only to express my solicitude, that you should correct any interpretation of either which you may think erroneous. If, either by the terms of the original Decree to which the French Minister’s letter refers, or by any other authentic document, you can prove, that the Decrees of Berlin and Milan are absolutely repealed, and that no farther condition is required of Great Britain than the repeal of her Orders in Council, I shall receive any such information with most sincere satisfaction; desiring you to understand, that the British Government retains an anxious solicitude to revoke the Orders in Council, as soon as the Berlin and Milan Decrees shall be effectually repealed, without conditions injurious to the maritime rights and honour of the United Kingdoms.—I

have the honour to be, with great respect and consideration, Sir, your most obedient and humble servant.—WELLESLEY.

Mr. Pinkney to Lord Wellesley. Great Cumberland-place, Jan. 14, 1811.

My Lord.—I have received the letter which you did me the honour to address to me on the 29th of last month, and will not fail to transmit a copy of it to my government. In the mean time, I take the liberty to trouble you with the following reply, which a severe indisposition has prevented me from preparing sooner.—The first paragraph seems to make it proper for me to begin by saying, that the topics introduced into my letter of the 10th of Dec. were intimately connected with its principal subject, and fairly used to illustrate and explain it; and consequently, that if they had not the good fortune to be acceptable to your Lordship, the fault was not mine.—It was scarcely possible to speak with more moderation than my paper exhibits, of that portion of a long list of invasions of the rights of the United States, which it necessarily reviewed, and of the apparent reluctance of the British government to forbear those invasions in future. I do not know that I could more carefully have abstained from whatever might tend to disturb the spirit which your Lordship ascribes to his Majesty's government, if, instead of being utterly barren and unproductive, it had occasionally been visible in some practical result, in some concession either to friendship or to justice. It would not have been very surprizing, nor very culpable perhaps, if I had wholly forgotten to address myself to a spirit of conciliation, which had met the most equitable claims with steady and unceasing repulsion; which had yielded nothing that could be denied, and had answered complaints of injury by multiplying their causes. With this forgetfulness, however, I am not chargeable; for, against all the discouragements suggested by the past, I have acted still upon a presumption, that disposition to conciliate, so often professed, would finally be proved by some better evidence than a perseverance in oppressive novelties, as obviously incompatible with such a disposition in those who enforce them, as in those whose patience they continue to exercise.

Upon the commencement of the second paragraph, I must observe, that the forbearance which it announces, might have afforded some gratification, if it had been followed by such admissions as my government is entitled to expect, instead of a farther manifestation of that disregard of its demands by which it has been so long wearied. It has never been my practice to seek discussions of which the tendency is merely to irritate; but I beg your lordship to be assured, that I feel no desire to avoid them, whatever may be their tendency, when the rights of my country require to be vindicated against pretensions that deny, and conduct that infringes them.

I comprehend the other parts of your lordship's letter, they are, in effect, that the British government will repeal nothing but the Orders in Council, and that it cannot at present repeal even them; because, in the first place, the French Government has required, in the letter of the Duke of Cadore to General Armstrong, on the 5th of August, not only that Great Britain shall revoke those Orders, but that she shall renounce certain principles of blockade (supposed to be explained in the preamble to the Berlin Decree) which France alleges to be new; and, in the second place, because the American Government has (as you conclude) demanded the revocation of the British Order of Blockade of May, 1806, as a practical instance of that same renunciation; or, in other words, has made itself a party, not openly indeed, but indirectly and covertly, to the entire requisition of France, as you understand that requisition.—It is certainly true that the American Government has required, as indispensable in the views of its acts of intercourse and non-intercourse, the annulment of the British blockade of May, 1806; and farther that it has, through me, declared its confident expectation that other blockades of a similar character (including that of the island of Zealand) will be discontinued. But by what process of reasoning your lordship has arrived at the conclusion, that the Government of the United States intended, by the requisition, to become the champion of the edict of Berlin,—to fashion its principles by those of France, while it affected to adhere to its own,—and to act upon some partnership in doctrines, which

(To be continued.)